



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

## Fact Sheet

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420  
(202) 461-7600  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

April 2021

### **Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups (CHALENG)**

Community Homelessness Assessment, Local Education and Networking Groups for Veterans, commonly referred to as Project CHALENG was launched in 1994 to bring together providers, advocates, Veterans and other concerned citizens to identify the needs of homeless Veterans and work to meet those needs through planning and cooperative action.

Project CHALENG has two components: a CHALENG survey, in which participants rate the needs of homeless Veterans in their local communities, and CHALENG meetings, which encourage partnership development between VA and community service providers. The results of the CHALENG survey are used each year to identify unmet needs and encourage new partnership development to meet those needs.

The legislation guiding this initiative is contained in Public Laws 102-405, 103-446 and 105-114.

Over the years CHALENG has helped build thousands of relationships between VA and community agencies so they can better serve homeless Veterans locally. Data from CHALENG on Veterans' unmet needs has assisted VA in developing major new services for Veterans such as the Homeless Veteran Dental Program (HVDP), the expansion of the Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program, the Veterans Justice Programs and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF). In addition, community organizations use CHALENG data in grant applications to support services for homeless Veterans; grant applications are for VA, other Federal, local government, and community foundation dollars, which maximizes community participation in serving homeless Veterans.

#### **2020 CHALENG Survey Participation**

- In 2020, 2,690 individuals completed a CHALENG Participant survey. This included 947 homeless Veterans and 1,743 providers and other stakeholders (VA staff, state and public officials, community leaders, volunteers).
- Nine percent of the homeless Veteran survey participants were women. Thirty-seven percent of the homeless Veteran participants were between the ages of 45-60 with another 44 percent 61 or older.



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- There were 1,743 provider and other stakeholder participants. Of these, 52 percent were VA staff, two percent were other Federal employees, 36 percent were state/local official or community providers, and 10 percent were interested members of the community.

### Top Homeless Veteran Needs Identified in 2020 CHALENG Survey

- Nine of the top ten *unmet* needs were the same for male and female Veterans: child care, family reconciliation assistance, housing for registered sex offenders and legal assistance in six areas: family law, court fees/court fines, credit issues/debt collection, expungement of a criminal record, child support issues, and tax issues.
- Eight of the top ten *met* needs were also the same for male and female Veterans: medical services, mental health services, case management, food, clothing, and testing and treatment for TB, HIV/AIDS, and Hepatitis C.
- Consistent with 2019 data and with the previous 20 years of CHALENG data, in 2020 met needs primarily reflect services that Veterans Health Administration (VHA) can provide directly, and unmet needs are primarily services that require community partnership to meet. This consistency underscores the importance of collaboration between federal, state, local, and community partners to meet the needs of homeless Veterans to successfully end homelessness.



## CHALENG 2020 Survey Results Summary

### CHALENG Participant Survey

#### A. CHALENG Participant Survey: Participation

**Total number of participants: 2,690**

- **Homeless Veteran participants: 947**
  - homeless Veteran male participants: 865
  - homeless Veteran female participants: 82
- **Provider and other stakeholder participants: 1,743**
  - VA Staff: 903
  - Other Federal staff: 38
  - State/local government agency, or community based homeless provider: 626
  - Interested member of the community: 176

#### B. CHALENG Homeless Veteran Participant Demographics

	Male Veterans	Female Veterans
Gender	91%	9%

Age	Male	Female	All Veterans
Less than 25	1%	1%	1%
25-34	6%	9%	6%
35-44	12%	16%	12%
45-60	36%	48%	37%
61+	45%	27%	44%



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Ethnicity	Male	Female	All Veterans
Non-Hispanic/ Non-Latino	74%	80%	75%
Hispanic/Latino	8%	6%	8%
Don't Know	18%	13%	18%

Race	Male	Female	All Veterans
American Indian or Alaskan	4%	6%	5%
Asian	1%	2%	1%
Black or African American	33%	38%	33%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2%	0%	1%
White	55%	49%	54%
Don't know	6%	5%	6%

Where Veteran was living at	Male	Female	All Veterans
Literally Homeless (on streets, in shelter, in car, etc.)	15%	9%	15%
Emergency Housing	4%	4%	4%
Transitional Housing (Grant and Per Diem housing, community contract housing)	33%	17%	31%
Permanent subsidized housing (HUD-VASH, section 8, etc.)	35%	43%	35%
Unsubsidized housing (private apartment/house/condominium)	13%	28%	15%



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### C. Ranking of Male Veteran Need (One to four scale, with one equals unmet and four equals met)

#### Top Ten Highest Unmet Needs, Male Veterans

Rank	Male Homeless Veteran Highest Unmet Needs	Mean Score
1	Registered Sex Offender Housing	2.30
2	Legal Assistance for Court Fees/Court Fines	2.41
3	Child Care	2.41
4	Legal Assistance for Credit Issues/Debt Collection	2.42
5	Family Law (i.e. divorce, child custody)	2.43
6	Legal Assistance to Expunge a Criminal Record	2.44
7	Tax Issues	2.52
8	Discharge Upgrade Appeals	2.56
9	Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues	2.57
10	Family Reconciliation Assistance	2.59

#### Top Ten Highest Met Needs, Male Veterans

Rank	Male Homeless Veteran Highest Met Needs	Mean Score
1	Medical Services	3.55
2	Case Management	3.47
3	Food	3.44
4	TB Testing and Treatment	3.44
5	Hepatitis C Testing and Treatment	3.37
6	HIV/AIDS Testing and Treatment	3.35
7	Services for Emotional or Psychiatric Problems	3.35
8	Clothing	3.30
9	Medication Management	3.28
10	Emergency/Immediate Shelter	3.28



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### D. Ranking of Female Veteran Need (One to four scale, with one equals unmet and four equals met)

#### Top Ten Highest Unmet Needs, Female Veterans

Rank	Female Homeless Veteran Highest Unmet Needs	Mean Score
1	Registered Sex Offender Housing	2.23
2	Child Care	2.39
3	Family Law (i.e. divorce, child custody)	2.45
4	Legal Assistance for Court Fees/Court Fines	2.46
5	Legal Assistance for Credit Issues/Debt Collection	2.49
6	Legal Assistance to Expunge a Criminal Record	2.52
7	Tax Issues	2.58
8	Family Reconciliation Assistance	2.59
9	Credit Counseling	2.59
10	Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues	2.60

#### Top Ten Highest Met Needs, Female Veterans

Rank	Female Homeless Veteran Highest Met Needs	Mean Score
1	Medical Services	3.53
2	TB Testing and Treatment	3.43
3	Case Management	3.43
4	Food	3.42
5	Hepatitis C Testing and Treatment	3.37
6	HIV/AIDS Testing and Treatment	3.35
7	Services for Emotional or Psychiatric Problems	3.35
8	Clothing	3.28
9	Substance Abuse Treatment	3.21
10	Health and Wellness	3.21



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**E. Ranking of Male Homeless Veteran Needs: Complete List ordered by Highest Unmet to Highest Met (One to four scale, with one equals unmet and four equals met)**

Rank	Male Homeless Veteran Need	Mean Score
1	Registered Sex Offender Housing	2.30
2	Legal Assistance for Court Fees/Court Fines	2.41
3	Child Care	2.41
4	Legal Assistance for Credit Issues/Debt Collection	2.42
5	Family Law (i.e. divorce, child custody)	2.43
6	Legal Assistance to Expunge a Criminal Record	2.44
7	Tax Issues	2.52
8	Discharge Upgrade Appeals	2.56
9	Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues	2.57
10	Family Reconciliation Assistance	2.59
11	Credit Counseling	2.61
12	Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines	2.64
13	Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License	2.65
14	Financial Guardianship	2.68
15	Dental Care	2.68
16	Discharge Upgrade	2.69
17	Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction/Foreclosure	2.71
18	Drop in Center and Day Programs	2.73
19	Emergency Housing for Families	2.75
20	Family and Marital Counseling	2.76
21	Assisted Living for the Elderly	2.81
22	Domestic Violence/Protection Orders	2.82
23	Parent Education	2.83



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Rank	Male Homeless Veteran Need	Mean Score
24	Social Networking	2.86
25	Financial Assistance to Prevent Eviction/Foreclosure	2.87
26	Money Managing	2.88
27	ADA Issues with Rental Housing	2.91
28	Prevention	2.93
29	Goods (Furniture and Housewares) for New Apartment	2.98
30	Welfare Payments	2.98
31	Life Skills Training	2.98
32	Re-Entry Services for Incarcerated Veterans	2.98
33	Spiritual	2.99
34	Move-In Assistance	2.99
35	Vocational Rehabilitation	3.00
36	Transportation	3.01
37	Affordable Housing	3.01
38	Basic Communication (i.e. working cell phone)	3.02
39	Elder Healthcare and Resources	3.03
40	Job Training	3.03
41	Education	3.04
42	Utility Assistance	3.04
43	Help Getting Identification and Other Legal Documents	3.06
44	Landlord Relations and Tenancy	3.06
45	Finding a Job or Getting Employment	3.08
46	Military Sexual Trauma	3.10
47	Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability (SSD)	3.10
48	Long-Term Permanent Housing	3.13
49	Treatment for Dual Diagnosis	3.15
50	VA Disability/Pension	3.16
51	Eye Care and Glasses	3.16





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Rank	Male Homeless Veteran Need	Mean Score
52	Transitional Living Facility and Halfway House	3.18
53	Detoxification from Substance	3.19
54	Basic Contact Information (i.e. reliable mailing address)	3.20
55	Personal Hygiene (shower, haircut, etc.)	3.24
56	Substance Abuse Treatment	3.25
57	Health and Wellness	3.25
58	Emergency/Immediate Shelter	3.28
59	Medication Management	3.28
60	Clothing	3.30
61	Services for Emotional or Psychiatric Problems	3.35
62	HIV/AIDS Testing and Treatment	3.35
63	Hepatitis C Testing and Treatment	3.37
64	TB Testing and Treatment	3.44
65	Food	3.44
66	Case Management	3.47
67	Medical Services	3.55



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**F. Ranking of Female Homeless Veteran Needs: Complete List ordered by Highest Unmet to Highest Met (One to four scale, with one equals unmet and four equals met)**

Rank	Female Homeless Veteran Need	Mean Score
1	Registered Sex Offender Housing	2.23
2	Child Care	2.39
3	Family Law (i.e. divorce, child custody)	2.45
4	Legal Assistance for Court Fees/Court Fines	2.46
5	Legal Assistance for Credit Issues/Debt Collection	2.49
6	Legal Assistance to Expunge a Criminal Record	2.52
7	Tax Issues	2.58
8	Family Reconciliation Assistance	2.59
9	Credit Counseling	2.59
10	Legal Assistance for Child Support Issues	2.60
11	Discharge Upgrade Appeals	2.61
12	Dental Care	2.66
13	Legal Assistance for Outstanding Warrants and Fines	2.68
14	Drop in Center and Day Programs	2.68
15	Financial Guardianship	2.69
16	Discharge Upgrade	2.72
17	Legal Assistance to Help Restore a Driver's License	2.73
18	Legal Assistance to Prevent Eviction and Foreclosure	2.75
19	Money Managing	2.80
20	Parent Education	2.80
21	Family and Marital Counseling	2.80
22	Social Networking	2.81
23	Emergency Housing for Families	2.84
24	Assisted Living for the Elderly	2.85
25	Breastfeeding Information and Supplies	2.87
26	Domestic Violence/Protection Orders	2.90
27	Transitional Living Facility and Halfway House	2.92



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Rank	Female Homeless Veteran Need	Mean Score
28	Financial Assistance to Prevent Eviction or Foreclosure	2.93
29	Prevention	2.93
30	Basic Communication (i.e. working cell phone)	2.95
31	Transportation	2.95
32	ADA Issues with Rental Housing	2.95
33	Spiritual	2.96
34	Life Skills Training	2.97
35	Affordable Housing	2.98
36	Women's Specific Mental Health Providers	3.02
37	Move-In Assistance	3.02
38	Goods (Furniture and Housewares) for New Apartment	3.02
39	Elder Healthcare and Resources	3.02
40	Re-Entry Services for Incarcerated Veterans	3.03
41	Landlord Relations and Tenancy	3.04
42	Education	3.04
43	Welfare Payments	3.05
44	Vocational Rehabilitation	3.06
45	Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability (SSD)	3.07
46	Basic Contact Information (i.e. reliable mailing address)	3.08
47	Emergency/Immediate Shelter	3.08
48	Women-Specific Healthcare Provider Availability	3.09
49	Help Getting Identification and Other Legal Documents	3.09
50	Job Training	3.10
51	Eye Care and Glasses	3.10
52	Utility Assistance	3.11
53	Personal Hygiene (shower, haircut, etc.)	3.12
54	Long-Term Permanent Housing	3.12
55	Finding a Job or Getting Employment	3.13
56	Treatment for Dual Diagnosis	3.13
57	Detoxification from Substance	3.13



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Rank	Female Homeless Veteran Need	Mean Score
58	OB/GYN Services	3.14
59	Domestic Violence Support Services	3.14
60	Military Sexual Trauma	3.16
61	Medication Management	3.19
62	VA Disability/Pension	3.19
63	Health and Wellness	3.21
64	Substance Abuse Treatment	3.21
65	Clothing	3.28
66	Services for Emotional and Psychiatric Problems	3.35
67	HIV/AIDS Testing and Treatment	3.35
68	Hepatitis C Testing and Treatment	3.37
69	Food	3.42
70	Case Management	3.43
71	TB Testing and Treatment	3.43
72	Medical Services	3.53